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NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

PLAT. *Rep.* vii. 521c: ὥσπερ ἐξ Ἄιδου λέγονται δὴ τινες εἰς θεοὺς ἀνελθεῖν

What particular persons are in Plato's mind? A number of names have been suggested—Heracles, Polydeuces, Asclepius, Dionysus, Semele, Briareüs—to all of whom Plato's words are in a certain sense applicable; and it is impossible to maintain that he was not thinking of one or all. Especially the ascent of Dionysus and Semele, which is mentioned by Plutarch in the myth of the *De sera num. vind* (566a), would afford a close parallel, if one could be sure that this mythical incident, whose source has not been discovered, was known in the fourth century B.C. In the other cases, the simile, which is intended to illustrate the ascent of the soul from the cave into the light of reality, cannot be taken quite so literally as one could wish (see Schneider's judicious note in his translation of the *Rep.*, p. 304). Furthermore, as Adam remarks, "there is more than a suspicion of satire in δὴ," such as might be employed in alluding to a simple story which only unintelligent and credulous folk would believe.

There is, however, a perfect parallel to the ascent of the soul from the cave which has not yet been observed. In his account of the precinct of Amphiaraus near Oropus, Pausanias (i. 34) says:

ἐστὶ δὲ Ὀρωπίοις πηγή πλησίον τοῦ ναοῦ, ἣν Ἀμφιαράου καλοῦσιν, οὔτε θύοντες οὐδὲν ἐς αὐτὴν οὐτ' ἐπὶ καθαρίοις ἢ χέρνιβι χρῆσθαι νομίζοντες. νόσου δὲ ἀκεσθείσης ἀνδρὶ μαντεύματος γενομένου καθέστηκεν ἄργυρον ἀφείναι ἢ χρυσὸν ἐπίσημον ἐς τὴν πηγήν· ταύτῃ γὰρ ἀνελθεῖν τὸν Ἀμφιάραον λέγουσιν ἤδη θεόν.

As the souls of the guardians ascend out of the cave and change from the human into a semblance of the divine, so Amphiaraus, previously a man, confined in the darkness of Hades, emerges into the upper world fully transformed into a god. Not only is the parallel perfect; the chronology also supports the contention that Plato may have had this very myth in mind. There is evidence (summarized by Frazer in his commentary on Pausanias, Vol. V, p. 31) to show that the oracle of Amphiaraus, who received divine honors very early, was transferred to Oropus toward the end of the fifth century B.C. The myth, therefore, whose home was in very close proximity to Athens, may have come into prominence within the lifetime of Plato. The suspicion which Adam once entertained, that the words in the text were "an early satirical adscript by some Pagan scribe on the doctrine of our Lord's descent into Hell and subsequent resurrection and ascent into heaven," seems to be completely allayed by this ancient parallel. For Amphiaraus,

reference may be made to P. Foucart, *Le culte des héros chez les Grecs*, pp. 15 ff.; Welcker, *Griech. Götterlehre*, Vol. III, pp. 294 ff.; Halliday, *Greek Divination*, pp. 116 ff. (on divination at sacred springs); Rohde, *Psyche*, Vol. I, pp. 143 f.

IVAN M. LINFORTH

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

ILIAD v. 885-87

ἦ τέ κε δηρὸν
αὐτοῦ πῆματ' ἔπασχον ἐν αἰνῆσιν νεκάδεσσιν,
ἦ κε ζῶς ἀμενηνὸς ἔα χαλκοῖο τυπῆσιν

If the text here is correct, these lines appear to make Ares say that if he had not escaped by his swift feet, he would now be *dead* or, if *alive*, much weakened by Diomedes' blows. ζῶς ("alive") requires "*dead*" as its only alternative. It is impossible, however, to interpret ll. 885-86 as equivalent to "I would be *dead*."

1. Ares was immortal, one of the ἀθάνατοι, and his death is inconceivable (see v. 402: οὐ μὲν γάρ τι καταθνήσκος γ' ἐτένυκτο). It is true that Hephaestus says in i. 593: ὀλέγος δ' ἔτι θυμὸς ἐνῆεν, and Dione declares in v. 388: καὶ νύ κεν ἐνθ' ἀπόλοιτο Ἄρης, but neither passage implies the actual death of a god, both statements being evident exaggerations to make a thrilling story more effective.

2. If Ares were *dead*, would he be suffering agonies? It is true that Tantalus, Sisyphus, and others suffered in the underworld for their sins on earth, but would Ares thus be punished?

3. Or would he suffer *a long time*? Why a long time, and not endlessly?

4. ἐν αἰνῆσιν νεκάδεσσιν cannot be forced to mean "among the dead below." The phrase can only refer to the horrible piles of corpses on the battlefield and hence denotes *position* ("among the dead bodies") not state ("one of the dead").

5. αὐτοῦ likewise refers to position on the battlefield and cannot possibly be regarded as denoting location in Hades or Tartarus.

The lines 885-86 can then be translated in only one way: "Truly I would long be suffering agonies there amidst the horrible heaps of dead bodies." What then is the alternative? Surely not "or *alive* I would be weak." He would be *alive* in either case.

Now I find a variant text ἦ κεν ζῶς. This furnishes a clue to the true reading. Without the addition or subtraction of a single letter the line may be thus written:

ἦ κ' ἐν ζῶσ' ἀμενηνὸς ἔα